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FROM: Christopher Rourke

PHONE: 214/969-4669

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RE: U.S. Serial No. 09/785,035 filed 2/16/01

Comments/Special Instructions

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1. A cable modem having a programmable media access controller, comprising:

- a system bus;
- a plurality of processors, each of the plurality of processors is communicatively coupled to the system bus, that perform a plurality of processing functions, the plurality of processing functions are partitioned, at least in part, between at least two of the plurality of processors;
- a peripheral bus that is operable to perform transfer of cable media;
- a bridge that communicatively couples the system bus and the peripheral bus; **[[and]]**
- a peripheral processing device, communicatively coupled to the peripheral bus, that is operable to perform processing of a selectively off-loaded portion of the cable media; **and**

wherein one of the plurality of processors monitors a boot process for one or more of the other plurality of processors and generates a failure indicator if the boot process fails.

9. A cable modem device, comprising:

- a bifurcated bus structure comprising a first bus and a second bus;
- a partitioned processor structure, communicatively coupled to the first bus, comprising a plurality of processors, that is operable to perform a plurality of processing functions;
- a co-processor, communicatively coupled to the second bus, that is operable to support processing of cable media that is selectively off-loaded from at least one of the plurality of processors;
- an input/output interface, communicatively coupled to the second bus, that is operable to perform data transfer of a plurality of data to the second bus; **[[and]]**
- a direct memory access controller that communicatively couples the first bus and the second bus and that is operable to support off-loading of at least one function of the plurality of functions to the co-processor; **and**

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wherein one of the plurality of processors monitors a boot process for one or more of the other plurality of processors and generates a failure indicator if the boot process fails.

17. A method to perform processing within a cable modem, the method comprising:
- performing cable media processing using a plurality of processors, the cable media processing is partitioned, at least in part, between at least two of the plurality of processors;
- selectively off-loading a portion of the cable media from at least one of the plurality of processors to a co-processor; ~~[[and]]~~
- processing the off-loaded portion of the cable media using the co-processor,
- monitoring with a first processor of the plurality of processors one or more boot processes for one or more of the other plurality of processors; and
- generating a failure indicator if the boot process fails.